

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

May 18, 2026

Susie Wiles
White House Chief of Staff
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Ms. Wiles:

We are writing to express serious concern regarding the lack of permanent leadership at the Office of Government Ethics (OGE). As the supervising ethics office of the Executive Branch,¹ OGE plays a vital role in the functioning of the federal government. However, OGE has been without a permanent director for over a year and is now operating without any leadership, even in an acting capacity.

As you know, OGE is responsible for providing “overall direction of executive branch policies related to preventing conflicts of interest.”² This includes promulgating conflict of interest regulations, establishing and maintaining ethics program procedures, and providing consistent and independent advice to over 130 agencies in the Executive Branch. OGE’s mission helps ensure that the more than 2 million government employees have the tools necessary to avoid problems related to ethics or conflicts of interest and – critically – maintain the trust of the American public. OGE simply cannot fulfill its role, as established by Congress, without a director.

As you are aware, President Trump removed OGE Director David Huitema in February 2025.³ The director’s office was subsequently occupied by several acting directors pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act (FVRA).⁴ These acting directors varied in their ability to lead OGE, as they maintained their roles leading other Executive Branch offices, limiting the office’s ability to conduct its duties.⁵

Under the FVRA, a vacancy cannot be filled by an acting director for more than 300 days,⁶ unless a nomination is pending.⁷ According to records received by Congress, OGE’s most recent acting director,

¹ 5 U.S.C. § 13101(18)(D).

² 5 U.S.C. § 13122(a).

³ Press Release, Feb. 10, 2025, U.S. Office of Gov. Ethics, OGE has been notified that the President is removing David Huitema as the Director of OGE. OGE is reverting to an Acting Director, <https://www.oge.gov/web/oge.nsf/News+Releases/FCCCCDB6367A7C0A85258C2D00683079>.

⁴ 5 U.S. Code § 3346(a)(1), available at <https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/5/3346>.

⁵ See Fredreka Schouten, *Trump removes top government ethics czar*, CNN (Feb. 10, 2025), <https://www.cnn.com/2025/02/10/politics/office-of-government-ethics-david-huitema-trump> (noting that Trump designated Doug Collins, the VA Secretary to also serve as the interim Director of OGE following Huitema’s firing); See Julianne McClure and Neil Gordon, *White House Official Doubling as Ethics Czar Sparks Concern*, POGO INVESTIGATES (Sep. 22, 2025), <https://www.pogo.org/investigates/white-house-official-doubling-as-ethics-czar-sparks-concern> (noting that while Jamieson Greer held the post as OGE Acting Director from April to September 2025, he simultaneously served as head of the OSC and was the U.S. Trade Representative – his multiple roles elicited concern from many lawmakers).

⁶ Under 5 U.S.C. § 3346, the limit is 210 days, however, 5 U.S.C. § 3349a(b)(2) provides that, where a director is removed during a presidential transition period (within 60 days of a new presidential administration), as Mr. Huitema was, an acting Director can serve for total of 300 days.

⁷ 5 U.S.C. § 3346(b).

Eric Ueland, discontinued his service in early December 2025.⁸ Since then, the 300-day limit for an acting director to serve as the head of OGE has expired, leaving the office without the leadership it needs to function. To date, President Trump has not nominated someone to serve as OGE Director, pending Senate confirmation.

OGE carries out important duties that ensure the Executive branch and its agencies follow guidance and procedures necessary to comply with ethics and conflict of interest laws. The Ethics in Government Act, Ethics Reform Act, STOCK Act, and Executive Order 12674, as modified, require OGE’s director to perform important duties including:

- “developing . . . rules and regulations pertaining to conflicts of interest and ethics in the executive branch, including rules and regulations establishing procedures for the filing, review, and public availability of financial statements”⁹
- “monitoring and investigating compliance with the public financial disclosure requirements”¹⁰
- “monitoring and investigating individual and agency compliance with any additional financial reporting and internal review requirements by law for the executive branch”¹¹
- establishing and maintaining a system for the electronic filing of financial disclosure reports (*Integrity.gov*)¹²
- “[p]romulgating . . . regulations establishing a system of non-public (confidential) financial disclosure”¹³
- “[p]romulgating . . . regulations that establish a single, comprehensive, and clear set of executive-branch standards of conduct”¹⁴
- jointly promulgating any supplemental ethics regulations proposed by agencies to address issues of “special applicability to the particular functions and activities of that agency”¹⁵
- “interpreting rules and regulations issued by the President or the Director governing conflict of interest and ethical problems and the filing of financial statements”¹⁶
- “establishing a formal advisory opinion service whereby advisory opinions are rendered on matters of general applicability or on important matters of first impression”¹⁷
- “ordering corrective action on the part of agencies and employees which the Director deems necessary”¹⁸

⁸ Cong. Record, Jan. 6, 2026 S48, EC–2365, available at <https://www.congress.gov/119/crec/2026/01/06/172/3/CREC-2026-01-06-pt1-PgS48.pdf> (stating that the White House reported on December 18th, 2025, that the acting Director of the OGE discontinued his service).

⁹ 5 U.S.C. § 13122(b)(1).

¹⁰ 5 U.S.C. § 13122(b)(3).

¹¹ 5 U.S.C. § 13122(b)(5).

¹² STOCK Act, P. Law. 112-105, 11(b)(1), 126 Stat. 299 (Apr. 4, 2012).

¹³ Exec. Ord. 12,674, § 201(a), 54 FR 15159 (1989), as modified by Exec. Ord. 12,731, 55 FR 42547 (1990).

¹⁴ *Id.* § 201(d).

¹⁵ *Id.* § 301(a).

¹⁶ 5 U.S.C. § 13122(b)(6).

¹⁷ 5 U.S.C. § 13122(b)(8).

¹⁸ 5 U.S.C. § 13122(b)(9), (f).

- “notify[ing] the President and the Congress of the agency’s noncompliance in writing (including, with the notification, any written comments which the agency may provide)”¹⁹

Without an acting or permanent director, OGE is unable to function as Congress intended. Accordingly, we ask that you provide the following information by May 22, 2026:

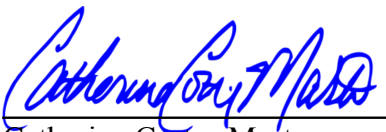
1. Who, if anyone, has been carrying out the duties laid out in 5 U.S.C. 13121-23 at OGE since Mr. Ueland’s departure in December 2025?
2. Without an acting or permanent OGE director, how has OGE met its obligations to update executive branch ethics regulations, including overseeing supplemental ethics regulations? Have any statutory or regulatory deadlines not been met?
3. Without an acting or permanent OGE director, has OGE provided formal and informal ethics guidance as required by the Ethics in Government Act and OGE’s regulations?
4. Without an acting or permanent OGE director, how has OGE effectively overseen agency ethics programs, including gaining access to the highest-level officials and compliance with its program review requests?
5. Has OGE notified the White House of deficiencies in compliance with OGE program review requests as required by law? If so, how many deficiency notifications has the White House received?
6. Without an acting or permanent OGE director, how has OGE effectively administered the financial disclosure program, including updating regulations as is necessary and appropriate and making final determinations on White House public financial disclosure reports?
7. Are efforts underway to appoint a new OGE director? If so, please describe those efforts.

We appreciate your attention to this matter and look forward to your response.

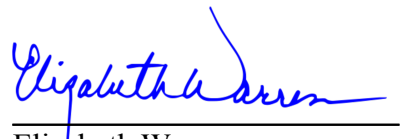
Sincerely,



Adam B. Schiff
United States Senator



Catherine Cortez Masto
United States Senator



Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator

¹⁹ 5 U.S.C. § 131; 5 U.S.C. § 13122(b); *see also* 5 U.S.C. § 13122 (d)(1), (f)(B), (e)(2).



Andy Kim
United States Senator



Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator



Cory A. Booker
United States Senator



Elissa Slotkin
United States Senator